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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 ANKARA 002947

SIPDIS

STATE FOR EUR/SE, SA, EUR/RPM

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TAGS: [MOPS](#) [PREL](#) [TU](#) [AF](#)

SUBJECT: AFGHANISTAN: TURKISH CHOD REITERATES TO GEN KUJAT THAT GOT'S CHOICE FOR PRT IS TAKHAR

REF: ANKARA 2901 AND PREVIOUS

(U) Classified by Deputy Chief of Mission Robert Deutsch.
Reasons: 1.5 (B and D).

SUMMARY

1. (C) Turkish CHOD GEN Ozkok reiterated to NATO's Chairman of the Military Committee GEN Kujat May 26 that the GOT's position on establishing a PRT in Takhar was firm and that Turkey would not establish a PRT in an alternate location. Ozkok noted a decision to deploy Turkey's HRF in Istanbul to Afghanistan to assume ISAF command in February 2005 was a political (not a military) decision for the GOT to make. He defended the caveats on the use of the Turkish helicopters for ISAF, which are scheduled to arrive in Kabul May 30. End summary.

KUJAT ENCOURAGES OZKOK TO CONSIDER ALTERNATE LOCATIONS FOR PRT

2. (C) MFA DDG for South Asian Affairs Aydin Evirgen (protect) told deputy pol-mil counselor May 26 that NATO Chairman of the Military Committee GEN Kujat had telephoned Turkish General Staff (TGS) CHOD GEN Ozkok earlier that day to discuss Provisional Reconstruction Teams (PRTs), the possible deployment of Turkey's HRF in Istanbul to Afghanistan in Feb 2005, and Turkish helicopters for ISAF. Evirgen provided the following readout of the call:

--PRTs: Kujat strongly suggested that Turkey establish a PRT in the south or the west. Ozkok responded that after the GOT's April recon visit to Afghanistan and respective internal studies, MFA/TGS decided that Takhar was the most appropriate location for Turkey. Ozkok said PM Erdogan concurs with this position. He closed by saying Turkey cannot establish a PRT in another location and Takhar is Turkey's final position. Kujat advised that the NATO SYG would call PM Erdogan and ask him to consider the south or the west. Evirgen told deputy pol-mil counselor that the PM's response would be the same as Ozkok's.)

--Turkish HRF to Kabul: Kujat inquired as to Turkey's position regarding the possible deployment of the Turkish HRF in Istanbul to Kabul from February to August 2005 to assume ISAF command. Ozkok said the decision was not TGS's to make; it was a political decision that the Turkish government will have to make. In response to a question from deputy pol-mil counselor as to when the GOT intended to make such a decision, Evirgen said while the GOT did not have a strict timeline, it hoped to make the decision before the NATO Summit in late June. Evirgen understood that the GOT was awaiting certain decisions in Brussels before it could make a decision, including: whether NATO would finance part of the operation and the rotation schedule among Allies.

--Turkish Helicopters for ISAF: Kujat said that the caveats on the use of the helicopters as conveyed to SHAPE by the Turkish MNR were too restrictive. Ozkok explained there were legitimate reasons for the caveats and argued that the helicopters would be able to meet the existing operational requirements.

6. (C) Evirgen told deputy pol-mil counselor there had been discussions between TGS and the MFA regarding the caveats. Evirgen noted that the Turkish military appeared to receiving the message that some of the caveats were unacceptable from SHAPE's perspective. Evirgen said the Turkish military believes that the caveats will still allow ISAF to carry out

its duties. At the same time, Evirgen said there are signs that the military appears to be revisiting some of its earlier positions. Evirgen offered the following details:

--Hours: TGS advised the MFA that during the initial discussions between the Turkish military and SHAPE, SHAPE planners did not object to restricting the helicopters to no more than 20 hrs/helicopter/month. SHAPE is now asking for 30 hrs/helo/month, in part to support ISAF PRTs. The Turkish military contends that right now, there is only one ISAF PRT (Konduz) and it is located beyond the radius that the helicopters can cover. At this stage, therefore, the Turkish military's position is that the helicopters cannot provide PRT support. If the situation changes in the future and other ISAF PRTs are established, the Turkish military is prepared to reconsider its position.

--VIP support: TGS is prepared to provide VIP support to NATO personnel on NATO missions and to Afghan officials. It is also willing to consider requests by others on a case-by-case basis.

--Support for Afghan Elections: TGS is prepared to provide support to NATO during the Afghan elections.

--Medevac support: TGS maintains that the helicopters are not equipped to provide medevac support. They will do what they can in cases of emergencies.

--Combat support: in the case of self-defense, when a NATO unit is attacked, the helos will provide combat support as needed.

14. (U) Kabul minimize considered.
EDELMAN